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This pamphlet contains addresses by Francis Keppel, Calvin E. Gross, and Samuel Shepard, Jr. before a 1964 public meeting called by the Council for Basic Education on the problems of educating the disadvantaged child. Questions and responses from the audience are included. (NH)

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U.S. Commissioner of Education

CALVIN E. GROSS
Superintendent of Schools
New York City

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NUMBER SEVEN

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at a public meeting of the
Council for Basic Education
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COUNCIL FOR BASIC EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Each year, in connection with its annual membership meeting, the Council for Basic Education holds a public session on a subject of current educational interest. At the meeting held in Lisner Auditorium, The George Washington University, on October 23, 1964, the topic for discussion was "How Should We Educate the Deprived Child?" The proceedings of that meeting are reported in the following pages.

The speakers were Francis Keppel, U. S. Commissioner of Education; Calvin E. Gross, Superintendent of Schools, New York City; and Samuel Shepard, Jr., Assistant Superintendent of Schools, St. Louis, Missouri. Dr. Gross and Dr. Shepard did not have prepared texts, their remarks being presented herewith as edited from a stenographer's transcript.

The welcoming remarks were made by Mrs. Barry Bingham, Book Editor of the Louisville *Courier-Journal* and President of the Council for Basic Education. The moderator was Arthur Bestor, Professor of History, University of Washington, and a founder of the Council, who also conducted the question period.

The Council wishes to express appreciation to the distinguished speakers for the light they have thrown on one of the vital educational questions of the day.

How Should We Educate the Deprived Child?

Mrs. Barry Bingham:

I am delighted to welcome you this evening in the name of the Council for Basic Education. In its concern for strengthening and elevating academic standards, the Council has sometimes erroneously been charged with being undemocratic; in fact, some people have said that we had in mind trying to create an educational "elite"—a word that is tantamount to treason with some Americans.

The problem, of course, is "How can we raise the general average while speeding the gifted few?" as the Harvard Report on General Education in a Free Society put it some years ago. Robert Hutchins has observed, "The great question of our time is whether the two ideas, education for all and education as development of the mind, are compatible." The Council for Basic Education agrees with Mr. Hutchins that these ideas *are* compatible. Indeed we must make them so, for if we cannot, that social dynamite which James B. Conant has assured us is lying around in such quantities will soon blow us all up.

So this evening the Council invites you to listen to three distinguished gentlemen who are familiar with our dilemma, who are concerned with educating what I prefer to call, with deep compassion, "the slum child," but which the deadly circumlocution of the day forces me, wincingly, to describe as the socio-economically handicapped youth.

With these few words, I will be happy now to turn the meeting over to our panel moderator, who is one of the founders of the Council for Basic Education, the distinguished historian of the University of Washington, Professor Arthur Bestor.

Arthur Bestor:

The announced title for tonight, "How Should We Educate the Deprived Child?" sounds like a new and modern question. I would like to suggest, however, that it is really the question with which Americans and American educators have been concerned from the very beginning of our history.

The famous Massachusetts School Law of 1647 was designed to thwart "that old deluder, Satan," by making sure "that learning may not be buried in the grave of our fathers." Even more famous is the provision of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 that reads: "Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged." These are, of course, eloquent arguments for free public schools. Let me remind you, moreover, that they are, with special particularity, arguments directed to the plight of the deprived child—the child who, potentially at least, might suffer deprivation because he lived on the edge of an expanding frontier at a distance from the centers of civilization.

From the very beginning, then, Americans have sought to locate those areas in which deprivation of educational opportunity might occur and to provide the means of preventing or rectifying such deprivation.

Today we are discovering that deprivation of opportunity is not simply a matter of geography or of distance. Educational deprivation can occur in our great and wealthy cities. It can occur in the countryside. It is not something far off but something uncomfortably close to home. On the other hand, the fact of deprivation may not be obvious at first glance. The hidden causes of educational deprivation must be deliberately sought out and remedied. This quest—summed up in our question tonight, "How Should We Educate the Deprived Child?"—belongs, I would suggest, to the central tradition of American education.

The fact that schools are local institutions does not mean that the quality and the availability of education are not matters of national concern. From the time of the Ordinance of 1787, the national implications of education policy have been so obvious as to give the Federal Government a legitimate role. That role is a delicate and complicated one to define. Only under most exceptional circumstances is the Federal Government called upon to organize or

conduct a school. But day in and day out the Federal Government carries the responsibility of reporting upon American education, of studying its problems, and of offering such assistance as may be necessary to fill gaps, to raise standards, and to develop new programs and techniques. Directing this complex task is the United States Commissioner of Education. This evening we have the privilege of hearing Francis Keppel, who has held that post since December of 1962. It gives me great pleasure to introduce Mr. Keppel.

Francis Keppel:

Twice within the last decade, American education has been taken by surprise. The first time came in 1957 in the wake of Sputnik I. With this event, America found to its dismay that a presumably backward dictator-state could out-distance us in what we had long regarded as our private preserve—our inventive, scientific and engineering prowess.

Among the various responses to Sputnik was a profound stirring of the public's concern for education. It was characterized by an unprecendented emphasis on science and mathematics in America's schools. And it was underscored in the passage by Congress of the National Defense Education Act, an act which saw education as vital to the defenses of democracy.

The second surprise came more recently—the discovery of underprivilege in a highly privileged society. Within the past few years, it was dramatized in Appalachia by poverty in the midst of national affluence, and by the civil rights movement, which exposed our cherished system of universal and equal education as something less than universal and something less than equal.

Among the responses to Appalachia and civil rights was a new public awareness of what we have doubtless known in our conscience—that poor education and poverty are closely linked, that segregation in education is inherently unequal. This awareness has led to the passage of the Civil Rights Act and the Economic Opportunity Act—the anti-poverty bill—with their important implications for education.

It has presented a new and fundamental challenge to education to meet the needs of those in our society whom we now describe as the deprived, the disadvantaged, the culturally underprivileged.

It has put American education, as President Johnson has recently told us, at the "very top of America's agenda."

It is in recognition of this challenge to American education that we are gathered here tonight. It is with this awareness of education's unmet role that we are called upon to discuss a highly complex but disarmingly simplified question.

How should we educate the deprived child? This sort of question reminds me of the reply given by Grumpy of Snow White's Seven Dwarfs when someone asked him: "How do you do?" "How do you do *what*?" Grumpy demanded. When someone asks, "How do you teach the deprived child?" I'm inclined to ask: "How do you teach him *what*?" Both the "how" and the "what" are the questions we must confront, and, in doing so, we shall deal with some of the most difficult problems before American education today.

We shall not resolve these questions by seeking easy or simple solutions. We shall not find our answers, I suspect, by avoiding controversy.

We might begin with profit by entering the arena of dissension between the views conventionally assigned to your Council for Basic Education and those usually attributed to professional educators. At the risk of throwing myself to the lions, I would like to assert to both flanks that far too much energy has been and is still being used in erecting straw men and flailing away at them.

There are those critics of the Council for Basic Education who insist that the Council is only interested in educating an elite, that the Council's policy is to "teach the best and shoot the rest." I can only conclude that they have neither read the statements nor understood the position of the Council. On the other hand, there are those within the Council who denounce educators as being mostly interested in "fun and games" for the disadvantaged, who say that teachers give up without any real effort to educate the deprived. They are equally guilty of slur and blur, of diverting our attention from the main issues.

Let me stake out where I stand. I believe the Council is fundamentally right in its insistence on the value of the academic disciplines —not only for the college-bound student, but for all students. We in education have not done well enough—anywhere near well enough—in educating the disadvantaged, or some of the advantaged, as far as that goes. Far too often we have given them second-class teaching and tried to disguise our failure.

At the same time, I believe that educators are often justified in

feeling that supporters of the Council may be unaware of the difficulties in teaching academic disciplines to all students. It is not as easy as they would make it out to be. Many useful approaches undertaken in the schools toward this objective have been misinterpreted, or seen as a deliberate dilution of basic academic values. What one man calls "fun and games," another in tonier language may call "the aesthetic delight of manipulation of concepts." Discussion between them has the eerie quality of ships passing lightless by night.

Over the years, many school teachers and administrators have worked hard to reach these children, have tried to deal with real difficulties, and have done so usually with little public support, or indeed, with little support from the academic circles which register most of the complaints.

The recent pre-school work of Dr. Martin Deutsch in New York and Professor Fred Strodtbeck in Chicago is now leading to useful research and analysis. Clearly the current debate would be helped by a few facts. We are much in need of them. We are planning to get them.

Despite gains made in research programs of the Office of Education, the National Institutes of Health, and the National Science Foundation, we simply are not yet training the numbers and kinds of researchers we must have. What we require—and the need is urgent—is more basic research in education, and, most important, expanded programs for training researchers.

Meanwhile, there are many reasons for discord in the educational fraternity, reasons of long duration and of more immediacy. Discord, in itself, does not discourage me. Indeed, it is perhaps the surest sign of educational change, of a necessary and creative response to the new demands now thrust upon us.

Most of us are doubtless aware of the principal and traditional source of discord. This, of course, is the long isolation of school teachers and teacher training from the academic and scholarly community. In many of our major universities, the school of education has long stood apart from the academic disciplines, and, by the way, usually not of its own volition. In New York City, 120th Street, which divides Teachers College and the rest of Columbia University, has long been known as the widest street in the academic world.

Only in recent years have we begun to bridge this gap between teaching in the schools and the academic world, to recognize that

the teacher and the scholar belong in the same family and ought to be on reasonable speaking terms. While we have gone some distance to accomplish this, we need to go the rest of the way if we intend to strengthen basic education not only for the disadvantaged but for the advantaged as well.

There are still uncomfortable signs that we are not yet speaking the same language, that some who speak for education have not yet emerged from the Tower of Babel. We still hear valuable innovations in education clubbed down as smacking of "Dewey progressivism." This is frequently a misinterpretation of what the progressive movement was really about, which was for students to learn by doing, by participating in the educational process.

Those who cheer, with great good cause, the new problem-solving approach to physics by Dr. Jerrold Zacharias or the new approaches to learning by Dr. Jerome Bruner often fail to realize that they have brilliantly developed what John Dewey conceived a generation ago.

We also tend to get muddled and befuddled about the real purpose of basic education. Today we still see in the newspapers solemn warnings that our schools are actually cheating a vast majority of our students by requiring them to take basic academic subjects—so-called "college preparatory" subjects—when they do not plan to go on to college. They assume that because these subjects are necessary for college, they are unnecessary for anyone who does not go to college.

To assume that academic subjects are merely an obstacle course for college admission is to miss the whole point of liberal education. It is in the great tradition of our secondary schools that history and geography, literature and science and mathematics be made available to all of our citizens, that they have merit in and of themselves. If their only value were to test the best and frustrate the rest, then we would wisely abandon them even for the college-bound and find some other basis for deciding college admissions.

In agreeing wholeheartedly with those in the Council who demand a good basic education for all students, whatever their social or economic status, I would also point to an area in which there has been less than understanding. And here I would call for a clear recognition of the present difficulties of teaching our disadvantaged students and for a creative concern in removing these difficulties. I think we need to acknowledge, all of us, that the force feeding of academic subjects simply won't work. We need to be more understanding,

more flexible and creative if we mean to succeed with the disadvantaged. We need to know much more about how and in what ways to proceed. Here we are only at the beginning. Here we have miles to go before we sleep, before we can assuage our conscience as teachers, as educators in our democracy.

But there are new opportunities now opening before us, new insights to guide us. They are coming clearly into focus at this time.

The essential focus comes from a coincidence of discovery and awareness about children and education today. At the very time that we have discovered that children can learn more and much earlier than we have heretofore believed possible is the comparison awareness that if we would succeed in the education of disadvantaged children, we had best start with them earlier than we have in the past.

First, let us speak for a moment of early learning potential. Through the findings of eminent scientists and scholars in physics and psychology, in English and the social sciences, we have begun to question and are now prepared to discard many old assumptions about how and how much, about how early and how quickly and how well children can learn.

Throughout the country, we are beginning to harvest the results of experiments in creative schools where 2 and 3 year old youngsters are learning to read and write, where 1st graders are learning the fundamentals of algebra, where 2d and 3d graders are becoming familiar with relativity physics, where 4th and 5th graders are learning to employ "set theory" in mathematics.

It now seems clear that we have been wasting enormous creative powers by beginning education too late, by assuming that there is some magical fixed age at which learning takes place, and by adhering slavishly to the notion of predetermined developmental levels.

It is time to recognize that the age of the learner is not as important as his previous learning experience, and that the desire to learn is associated with what has already been learned. In other words, a child who has been exposed to music and literature, reading and writing before his formal school experience will learn more and achieve more in school than will the child who has not had this exposure. I grant you that this scarcely seems a profound thought; it is rather a troublesome one when compared to our present practice.

This learning readiness of the young is one point of reference. The second is closely tied to the first—that early learning increases the chance for later success and can help to make up for early deprivations. If the deprived child is to become an able student and later a productive member of society, his formal education would wisely begin before his more fortunate contemporaries begin their schooling.

The protoplasm of children, I trust we agree, is much the same. Whatever their color, their creed, or the affluence or lack of affluence of their parents, they all have similar potential at birth. The differences occur shortly thereafter.

In education, we have long been aware that teaching children in our city slums and poor rural areas is often a difficult task; that their family and neighborhood environments are inhospitable to academic learning; that they bring a host of problems to our schools beyond the usual problems. Their parents are frequently unemployed. Their homes are unstable. Their language ability, as we usually measure it, is very limited.

These children of poverty are the children who become school dropouts not because they have failed us but because we, in education and in our society, have failed them. Their numbers today are large. They are increasing. Our past efforts to improve their lot, if we speak in candor, have been largely ineffective.

But now their problem is ours. It has become visible and will remain so. This visibility has been courageously made evident in such cities as New York, by such educators as my colleague, the superintendent of New York City schools, Calvin Gross, who has not been content to sweep this problem under the educational rug. Through the frankness of New York City in opening its records, a trenchant study by the organization called HARYOU—Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited—was made possible almost a year ago.

This study revealed to us what we could well have found in many American cities if they had been as equally frank as New York, a confirmation of what we in education have suspected all along. These were the findings in Harlem:

—In the 3rd grade, Central Harlem pupils have been fully a year behind the achievement levels of other New York City pupils. By the 6th grade, they have fallen nearly two years behind; by the 8th grade, they are almost three years behind.

—Approximately three-fourths of the pupils in the Central Harlem

junior high schools are performing below grade level in both reading comprehension and word knowledge. In no junior high school has the proportion of under-achievers been less than 70 percent—and in some schools, it has been more than 80 percent.

—The pattern of test and I.Q. scores has shown that education in Central Harlem has been marked by massive educational deterioration. The longer pupils have been in school, the greater has been the proportion who fail to meet established and comparative norms of academic competence. By the 8th grade, the damage has been done and acceptable grade levels thereafter are never attained.

This is what New York and Harlem told us a year ago.

In the months since this report was released, we have witnessed a growing realization that we can interrupt this cycle of poverty linked to poor education if we start early enough. It is possible to start later, but most difficult. To do so successfully calls for the talent that my other colleague this evening, Sam Shepard of the St. Louis Banneker School District, has accomplished. Some say he has done it with "charisma"—an elegant word for inspiration. I know he will inspire us.

But usually, and with most educators, we rarely succeed in reaching the deprived in later and frustrating school years. To succeed, we are coming to recognize that our greatest possibility lies in early childhood education.

Here we are only at the start of the trail. Recently, when Charles Silberman proposed a nationwide program of pre-school education for the disadvantaged, his magazine article was ironically subtitled: "A Radical Proposal."

In a few cities, we have seen this "radicalism" put to meaningful effect. Our efforts to date are marked by nursery school programs in the slums staffed by volunteers in St. Louis and Kansas City; by summer nursery schools for disadvantaged children in Chicago; and by substantial pre-school programs financed in part by the Ford Foundation in New York and in Baltimore, Maryland. We must go much further, of course.

Tonight, I would like to conclude this journey with a brief expedition up the Washington-Baltimore Parkway—to the Early School Admissions Project in Baltimore. In this neighboring city, public school administrators three years ago asked whether a pre-kindergarten year—a pre-school year beginning for children at the age of

four, instead of the conventional ages of five or six—would increase the chances for success of teaching deprived children and diminish the frustrating failures that usually occur at six or eight or ten years of age.

After asking this question, Baltimore proceeded to find the answer in its most depressed neighborhoods, where crime and delinquency rates have been so high that school teachers have found it unwise to make home visits alone or after dark. In these neighborhoods, children selected from the poorest homes have been brought into pre-school classes in four schools as part of the daily educational program.

In these pre-school classes, imaginative kindergarten teachers have been assisted by volunteer mothers and teacher-aides who work in partnership with the parents of the children. According to Mrs. Catherine Brunner, the school administrator in charge of this program, these are the first findings:

—Every Baltimore child who entered the pre-school project in February 1963 entered kindergarten in September 1963 and first grade in September 1964. In the past, older children from the same families often failed to enroll in kindergarten at all.

—In kindergarten, these children with pre-school experience had no problem of school adjustment, according to their teachers. Instead, they adjusted as well to school as middle-class or well-to-do children admitted to other Baltimore kindergartens.

—Preliminary estimates by their teachers now indicate that two-thirds of children from the pre-school project show achievement in kindergarten at the top 50 percent of their class, and that one-sixth of these children are in the top quartile of their class. This level of accomplishment is now holding true as they go into the 1st grade.

—About 70 percent of the parents of these children have already confirmed that they are showing marked progress in their ability to read, speak, express ideas, and work cooperatively with others in their family and community.

These are the preliminary findings. They will be followed up by further statistical measurements. But one measure already taken, which strikes me as much to the point of our meeting tonight, is the candid and heartwarming judgment of a kindergarten teacher in one of these deprived neighborhoods. This is what she says:

"I've always been in the habit of mentally dividing my kindergarten classes into two sections—those who come from poorer homes

and lack much background for learning, and those who come from better homes and are accustomed to books in their families. This always seemed a logical division to me—between the dull children, the ones who need most help, and the bright ones, who go along quickly.

"But what seemed logical before this project started doesn't seem so logical to me today. The Baltimore youngsters who have this new pre-school experience, I'm finding, belong among the highest-achieving children in my classes. And this is where I place them now. It makes me wonder whether many of us in teaching haven't been wrong for a long time, whether we haven't a lot to learn ourselves."

Like this teacher, we, all of us in education, all of us in our society, have a lot to learn. Our greatest blessing today is that we are beginning to learn it.

Dr. Bestor:

The problems of teaching the deprived child are problems to be encountered in many different places. Historically, I suppose, we have been more concerned with the problem of deprivation in inaccessible rural neighborhoods than with the problem in our large cities. Today, certainly, the emphasis is shifting. We are acutely aware of the problems of urban education. We are learning much about education and about society from the studies and experiments under way in our large cities—not least in the largest of them all. No one can speak to these questions with greater knowledge and experience than the man I have the honor next to introduce: Dr. Calvin E. Gross, Superintendent of Schools of the City of New York.

Calvin E. Gross:

In talking about the education of deprived children, I think we should face up squarely to the issue, "Are the children from slums really completely educable?" The reason I put it this way is that too many people believe they are *not* educable, although they may not be willing to say so. For one reason or another, through frustration or through prejudice in some cases, or through faintheartedness, they feel that there is no use trying because you can't succeed, that there is, somehow, through some process or lack of processes, inferior stock on which to work. But we are not going to get to first base in this enterprise unless we are willing to make the commitment, to believe that the children of the slums are indeed fully educable.

I would like to quote something that Dr. Martin Deutsch of my city has written on this subject. He said: "An examination of the literature yields no explanation or justification for any child with an intact brain, who is not severely disturbed, not to learn all the basic scholastic skills. The failure of such children to learn is the failure of the schools to develop curricula consistent with the environmental experiences of the children and their subsequent abilities and disabilities."

That may be technical language. It was written to be read, perhaps, and not heard; but this is Deutsch's way of putting his commitment, and Deutsch is indeed one of the leaders, one of the people on whom we really depend these days in learning something about how to educate the deprived child. He is one of the people who believes, with me, that one of the last great reservoirs of untapped talent lies in the slums of our great cities, that this is where we can go prospecting for "high-type protoplasm," as Frank Keppel puts it.

I would like, if I may, to put this problem in the context of New York City for a minute, if only to expose my bias so that you will understand from what basis I speak this evening. I will give you a few statistics about New York City's school system, and let you ponder the ramifications in terms of our topic for yourself. Of our city-wide enrollment, 25% of our children are Negro; 17% are Puerto Rican—that's 42% of our entire enrollment. In Manhattan, in the elementary and junior high schools, this combination reaches 74%. Of our 1,050,000 students, 86,000 students speak English only hesitatingly, or not all all. Last year, 11,000 pupils came to us from Puerto Rico and 6,000 from the rural South. There are 221,500 students in our school system who regularly get free lunches. In the last five years, our enrollment increased about 77,000, which is more than the total enrollment in Buffalo, the state's second largest city.

Each year we have 95,000 students transferring from school to school within the city. This is typical of the slums in big cities. In Pittsburgh, the principals at a cluster of five schools in the so-called "Hill District" found a third-grade girl who had moved 16 times, and had been in all five schools in the process. Benjamin Willis, the Superintendent of Schools in Chicago, has a favorite story about the teacher in the school who took a leave of absence to have an appendectomy, and when she came back, had to be re-introduced in her class because most of her students had changed in the meantime.

In New York City, we have dozens of classrooms where 35 seats occupied in the fall will be occupied by 35 other students in June.

Well, now, who is this deprived child? What is he like? There are many ways of describing his characteristics. Poor attendance and a greater proportion of health defects are certainly among them. He is more apt to be a recent arrival. There are people from rural areas who still have not been taught that in New York City, or in any city, you don't toss garbage out the window because this allows the rats to continue to breed.

I want to say something about one aspect of educating the deprived child because it involves one of the major topics of the day: the fact is we must give some consideration to integration in thinking about the education. I don't want to say very much about integration tonight because probably too much has been said about it in New York City in recent days anyway. But I do want to point out that we have been reasonably successful in using integration as a sort of umbrella for the general enhancement of quality in at least some of our schools. This is notably true in the case of our after-school study centers, where we have children coming from three to five in the afternoon, four days a week, for special tutoring from their teachers who are paid; and also in the case of our pre-kindergarten programs, which we have considered to be a part of our integration program because we are attempting to provide better racial balance and higher quality education at the same time.

We have established ten "More Effective Schools," and will be increasing the number, where we are spending an additional $4 million yearly in just those ten schools to reduce class size, to increase services, to attract teachers, to provide the finest kind of professional working conditions, so that we can apply everything we know how to do, and try to find out new ways, to educate the children of those schools.

What are some of the necessary elements in a solution of this problem of educating the deprived? I want to touch upon two or three in particular. I want to mention, first, the teaching of reading. How can I really emphasize its importance? And yet, why should I belabor what everyone in this room, I am sure, believes passionately —that reading is first among the three R's. I don't want to go into great detail about this this evening. I have on other occasions, but I am no expert on reading. Perhaps there is disagreement about different ways of teaching reading, but nevertheless, we have not con-

centrated sufficiently on the importance of reading; neither have we succeeded sufficiently in teaching reading absolutely and finally before the child leaves the primary years.

I think that liaison with the community in the particular context of which we are talking is essential. On this particular topic I defer completely to Dr. Shepard because I know he is going to talk about that.

Frank Keppel had quite a bit to say about pre-kindergarten instruction. I would like to say something about that, too. I would like to give you the benefit, if you will let me call it that, of some of my pet peeves on the subject, because I think in some ways we appear to be getting off on the wrong foot. To try to place this problem in its proper perspective, I have characterized it as pre-kindergarten instruction—and by the way, I have used all those words advisedly; I don't like to call it pre-school because to me that is a contradiction in terms. Some people call it nursery school, but this just won't do because it is not nursery schooling which typically is for the middle class, and I like the word "instruction" in preference to education because it implies that something active is being done, not that a process is being nurtured.

I have characterized pre-kindergarten instruction as "the hottest thing that ever came down the pike." I think it's no longer "radical," but something that we must very definitely be about. The trouble is, we don't know yet what to do, and thereby hangs the tale, and we have to be careful.

There is a substantial body of animal experimentation which shows what happens, for example, when a litter of puppies is separated and brought up in two different environments under markedly contrasting circumstances. One part of the litter as pets is given the opportunity of associating with children, of playing with toys, of being taught to do things. The other part of the litter is brought up in the cold gray of the laboratory at a constant temperature, always having the same light, the same kind of food, no stimulation whatsoever.

The results are always what you might expect, but the significant part of the experimentation is that the animals which have been deprived of stimuli never do quite learn all that the animals raised as pets were able to be taught. Something irreversible happens, something very crucial; and although it is dangerous in the extreme

to generalize from animals to human beings, one may perhaps draw some lessons for human beings, or at least token warnings.

Martin Deutsch, who, as far as I know, is way out in front in his experimentation, speaks of intervening in the life of the child. He and his associates are studying very precisely such things as what happens at the age of six months or a year when the verbal and visual stimuli impinging on a child are augmented or diminished in various ways.

The trouble is, with particular attention to the slum environment, this is still research. You say to the researcher, "I'm just an average school man. What do we do in the classroom? In the light of what you just told me about your findings do you mean that in the classroom we should do so and so?" He answers, "No, no, you shouldn't do so and so at all." And then he paraphrases what he has just told you, and what it amounts to is that he will not allow you to generalize. The point is that for the time being we are on our own in the school systems, as far as deciding what to do is concerned.

The people who have been providing day care for children for years think that they know just what to do to provide the proper environment for four-year-olds, three-year-olds, or two-year-olds. The people in our establishment who are experts in child development also know exactly what to do, and will develop for you a most lovely middle-class curriculum in what they call nursery-school education, without appropriately adapting it to the slum—the deprived environment that we are talking about. These matters, I think, are of surpassing importance, and what we have to do is move ahead, and do the best we can, and be careful, but not kid ourselves in the process; and in the meantime use as much as possible of the information that Deutsch and others are putting out a little at a time.

I also would like to point out that there are people, or perhaps I should say, notably one man, Frank Riessman, at the Institute of Urban Studies at Rutgers, who in what he calls the "education stratagem for the transition period"—by that he means from *de facto* segregation to integrated situations—says that the important thing is to catch up in afternoon, weekend, and vacation work, and not to go into the pre-school years. There are already people who are saying we have to be cautious about teaching in the pre-school years.

Riessman says "pre-school programs, while important, are not the answer, and they have been over-emphasized. We believe that major developments in integration and education are going to take

place within the next decade, and current pre-schoolers will simply not be old enough to play any role in these decisive developments. Hence, much more attention must be given to our present-day adolescents."

I wholeheartedly disagree with this. I think we *have* to begin with the pre-schoolers, *now*, before it is too late. While we must not give up with the adolescents and write off that generation, we must not kid ourselves that here is where we are going to solve a problem, because some of our dropouts are going to keep right on dropping out because of some of the things we failed to do ten years ago.

Now, having said this much about the various possible strategies, as some people call them, for educating the disadvantaged child, let me just put the matter in one more context and I'll stop. I think that having taught the basic skills, the fundamentals, if you will, then it is very important that this child should not be "sold short." His eventual possibilities of achieving real intellectual distinction should not be discounted in advance. He should not be shunted off into a vocational school, as if a job was all there were to life. We should be trying to teach all students—and perhaps especially the deprived students—to develop all their talents, and not just their marketable skills.

As I have said before, every citizen of this country, whether he pounds nails, raises corn, designs rockets, or writes poetry, should be taught to know and love his American heritage, to use the language well, to understand the physical universe, and to enjoy the arts. The dollars he gains in the absence of enlightenment like this will be earned in drudgery and spent in ignorance.

I think that for the first time in years, we are beginning to have a clear conception of what the issues are and what are some of the most promising techniques. We know, at least, some of the sensitive points where leverage can be applied and we have the new tools and innovations with which to do the job. I know that you are just as interested as I am in making every possible effort to learn how to apply these new tools and techniques to solve the learning problems of the deprived as they are being defined for us.

Dr. Bestor:

As the representative of the Council for Basic Education, I have been pleased beyond measure to see how completely in agreement the speakers this evening have been with the purposes and principles

of the Council. The remarks of Dr. Gross are in keeping with a statement made in 1837 by one of the great educational and religious leaders of his day, William Ellery Channing:

> "We are told that this or that man should have an extensive education; but, that another, who occupies a lower place in society, needs only a narrow one; that the governor of a state requires a thorough education, while the humble mechanic has need only to study his last and his leather. But why should not the latter, though pursuing a humble occupation, be permitted to open his eyes on the lights of knowledge? Has he not a soul of as great capacity as the former? Is he not sustaining the same relations as a parent, a citizen, a neighbor, and as a subject of God's moral government?"

The impressive thing about present developments in American education, I think, is the degree to which the speakers on this evening's program, and so many educational leaders like them, are striving to attain for all American children an opportunity to recoup, in the schools, the intellectual losses they may have suffered as a consequence of the environment in which they have been obliged to live or of the discrimination that has been practiced against them as members of a minority group.

Outstanding for his contributions to this work is the man whom I have the pleasure of introducing as our last speaker, Dr. Samuel Shepard, Jr., Assistant Superintendent of Schools in St. Louis.

Samuel Shepard, Jr.:

The work we have been carrying on in the Banneker District in St. Louis to raise the academic achievement of our boys and girls has been extremely interesting and, at times, actually exciting. Certainly, the results have been most satisfying, even amazing. I am delighted to be here this evening to talk about these matters. Certainly I come not with answers although we have often been successful in our efforts. Our efforts, I think, have been tailor-made to our own particular district, but we are willing to share these experiences with you. In the time allotted to me, I can only scratch the surface.

Our situation is much better than it has ever been in the past. The achievement level of our boys and girls certainly has gone up amazingly; they are more interested in school; they attend much better; they are much better behaved. Along with that, our teachers and principals are working harder than ever before, and liking it

better and enjoying it more than ever before. I think the real difference has been with the parents. The cooperation that we have received from our parents has been absolutely beyond expectation, and our community has been behind us 100 percent.

The Banneker District is some 15 square miles, the real inner city, the real core of the city, the slum area. For example, of the seven low-cost, high-rise projects in our city, five of them are located within the boundaries of the Banneker District. This year we have about 15,000 youngsters, 95% Negro. There are 23 schools and approximately 500 teachers, about 90% of whom are Negro. And in terms of trying to give you a frame of reference, a background of the district, it certainly is the poorest of the six in our city. The St. Louis public schools are on a decentralized plan of administration. There are six districts—the 150 elementary schools being divided into six geographical districts. There are two high school districts. Our elementary schools operate from kindergarten through grade 8, our secondary schools, of course, 9 through 12.

In attempting to describe briefly our efforts in the Banneker district, I would say we really work as a team of administrators, teachers, pupils, parents, and, to some extent, the community. I have said we are elementary school—kindergarten through grade 8. We do not have a research design, and we do not have the financial backing that we now need. We are not making any wild claims as to what we have done. We know that our approach to the problem is just one of many, but that our techniques certainly have been tailor-made for our own situation. The heart and soul of our approach is hard work by all those in what I would call the teaching-learning situation, meaning the principal, the teacher, the pupil and the parent, and, secondly, an abiding faith that our pupils have the potential to learn.

We see the problem, simply stated, as one of low academic achievement. I know this is an over-simplification of the situation because there are many facets to the problem, but we perceive the problem as if it were a single thread running from the first day in school to the dropout and the subsequent reliance on public assistance for life's sustenance. Therefore, we believe we are helping to solve the total problem if we can produce an elementary school pupil who is so skilled in the basic subjects of reading, language and arithmetic that he can honestly, actually participate in, and benefit from, a first-class secondary school program. If we can produce such youngsters,

certainly they will not drop out of school because the work is too hard. They will not drop out of school because they cannot participate in the program.

We say, if we can realize this goal, we believe we will have created a situation that will go a long way toward preventing delinquency, and thereby enable youngsters to see themselves in a worthy light with hope for the future. This is our belief; this is our working philosophy. Therefore, six years ago, we embarked upon the objective of raising the academic achievement level of all of our pupils, and as practitioners, we believed most sincerely that our greatest task was to change the tide of thinking of every principal and teacher in our District, to recognize that our pupils were capable of learning. We preached that learning was not based upon color of the skin, the level of education of the parents, the socio-economic status of the parents, the occupation of the father, the number of books and magazines in the home—not any of these things—or even the I.Q. We believed that we needed to encourage, stimulate and motivate our pupils, and that we needed to help them build confidence in themselves.

We believed that parents could change their attitudes of indifference, and even hostility, toward the school and the school staff; that parents needed to change their attitude of contempt for education and learning to one of respect and esteem; and that education, learning and achievement are the means by which they might see a better life, not necessarily for themselves, but for their children.

I believe most sincerely that in dealing with parents, for example —and the general public perhaps—that the greatest mistake that we as educators make is to assume that everyone understands the school operation, its policies—in short, its administration.

I want you to clearly understand what the conditions are confronting the schools and the school people in St. Louis in the Banneker District, conditions that I think have been overlooked in our nation when we consider that the minorities, and particularly the Negroes, have not had much incentive to make achievement in school a major goal. I would like to describe for you what I think the situation is in my own district because I think this is typical in our big cities.

It is not uncommon to find five to six children, together with their parents—and sometimes their grandparents—forced to live

in one or two rooms, which have euphemistically been called "efficiency apartments." This usually means, at best, that the children must sleep huddled together in herd-like fashion. These apartments, many times, are completely devoid of modern conveniences; for example, a private bathroom would be most infrequent. If there is one at all, it usually must be shared with two to as many as six other families. Moreover, such a bathroom, for obvious reasons, is usually out of repair. Central heating or hot running water would be a novelty. It takes no stretch of the imagination, then, to see that such living conditions do not begin to meet the minimal requirements for physical hygiene, to say nothing of those for mental and moral wholesomeness.

Reports that conditions such as these foster and nurture all kinds of social evil and crimes are not, I assure you, an exaggeration. The policies and practices governing the administration of the various forms of public assistance, and in many instances patterns of racial discrimination in employment and union membership stretching back over generations, have reduced the male adult member of many Negro families to a status of a drone, a figure who, by normal American standards, has been so emasculated by the forces around him that he ceases to be a specimen of manhood with which his sons can identify. So not only do we find, among too many children of the slums, the absence of a desirable father image, but also the absence of a father, and worse, because of its disruptive effect upon society, a pervading sense of insecurity and pride-destroying doubt of the worthiness and dignity of self. It is not surprising, then, that a pall of lethargy, frustration, defeat and even despair, resulting as it always does in low levels of aspiration, hangs over the heads of so many children and parents in the Banneker District, and penetrates deeply into their values and their living patterns.

Let us for a moment take a brief look at these parents. It is not too difficult to understand why many of these long-standing victims of racial prejudice and job discrimination either had little opportunity for formal education or have been unable, as a result of such debilitating experiences, to see the worth of whatever educational opportunities were offered.

In other words, many Negro parents have acquired incompatible value systems, which, during their own youth, disposed them to take little, if any, advantage of educational facilities. As a consequence, a greatly disproportionate number are now unskilled, possessing

nothing to sell on the employment market. These must now be the recipients of charities or resort to crime and violence to obtain a livelihood. Can anyone be surprised at the moral, physical and cultural atmosphere such parents are able to provide their children, producing nothing but a spirit of defeat, frustration and hostility? Indeed, the marvel is that there is any orientation at all toward socially acceptable patterns of behavior and any aspiration at all toward upward mobility.

In spite of the dismal picture that the facts paint, we in the Banneker District believe that all is not hopeless. Why? Because we are convinced that many of the worst and socially dangerous effects of cultural incompatibility and disadvantage can be overcome, especially indifference toward and disdain for formal education and cultural improvement.

We subscribe unconditionally to the principle that no group of people, regardless of its racial background, socio-economic level, or religious persuasion, is inherently incapable of being absorbed in the democratic way of life as we know it. Culture, as we see it, is learned, not inherent. We believe, therefore, that a program designed and conscientiously carried out to motivate both the children and their parents toward greater academic effort on the part of the former, can overcome an impoverished culture. I think that unless we understand exactly the situation from which these youngsters come, their motivation or their lack of it, or their lack of readiness for education—unless we understand this clearly, we are not going to do the right things. We are only going to guess.

We have worked with all the people in what I call the teaching-learning situation. That is, we started with ourselves as the administrators, and with principals, and we met every Thursday morning. We have come out of our "ivory towers." We know that there is hardly a program that is going to be successful without the understanding, the sympathy, the empathy of the principal, and if it does not have his or her support, it is not going to get to first base. So we have worked with our principals. They have been very coopera tive. They have become very flexible in their willingness to listen to their teachers—and this is a real innovation, working and cooperating with them.

We have worked with our teachers in the same spirit and we have urged them to do certain things. Mainly we ask our teachers to do four things: (1) we ask them to quit teaching by I.Q.; (2) we ask

them to quit their attitude of condescension in work with these youngsters; (3) we ask them to assign home work; (4) we ask that they visit the homes of the parents.

Our teachers have done a wonderful job. They have accepted this kind of a challenge. I think we got next to them with our little story about the I.Q., which you have heard, but which I will not omit because I think it epitomizes what has been said by the two previous speakers in one way or another. We met with these teachers every semester in a faculty meeting, at noon in our own building, and someone said, "What do you mean 'quit teaching by I.Q.?' "

We explained this in terms of a little story which was actually true. A teacher was working with Mary. She knew that Mary had an I.Q. of 119, so when she called on Mary, if Mary did not respond very quickly, the teacher would say, "Come on, Mary, you can do this. You have to think. You know how we worked at this last week," et cetera.

What was the teacher doing? She was pushing, stimulating, encouraging, motivating.

But when she called on Charles, who had an I.Q. of 71, he grunted and couldn't answer. Quickly she said, "That's fine, son. We're glad you're here. Be sure to be here tomorrow. We are going to move the piano; you can water the flowers and clean the erasers." This is "teaching by I.Q." That teacher had peace of mind every night. She was "differentiating the curriculum"; she was "differentiating the instruction."

We ask the teachers to quit this, to stop labeling youngsters, and to treat them with respect and esteem. And I am here to tell you this evening, we have really accomplished this. Many of the people who come and visit us have coined, I guess, another expression. They say to me, "I think what you have been able to accomplish here is a middle-class environment in the schools of a slum neighborhood." That is a way of characterizing how well these teachers have answered this challenge.

As for the pupils, we have come up with perhaps twenty-five or fifty different approaches to help them overcome handicaps which they bring to school. I won't recite anything that we are doing in this respect in terms of a list but I will tell you one program that I think is a little different. It is a radio-based program entitled "Mr. Achiever." Mr. Achiever is a mythical character we have created for

the boys and girls of Banneker District. He does all kinds of things in moving about within the district. He gives hints and suggestions on how to succeed in school. He starts with a motto for the pupils, which is "Success in school is my most important business." Then he creates posters and all kinds of slogans emphasizing success in school. We try to create in the schools a positive atmosphere for learning and achievement. When you come in, at the front door you are immediately met by a half-dozen or more posters that perhaps in a subtle way suggest: "Success in School," or "Achievement."

Not only does Mr. Achiever broadcast once a week to them, but he conducts contests of one kind or another. He uses "bonus words." He uses "passwords of the week." This program has penetrated the hearts and minds of our boys and girls to the point that perhaps the following anecdote would typify the situation. I stopped a couple of youngsters two weeks ago as I was riding through the district. They were on the streets during school hours. They listened patiently and respectfully to me for about five minutes as I lectured, I guess, to them. When they thought I was finished, they said, "What did Mr. Achiever say the passwords of the week were?" That is, they weren't paying any attention really; they were just waiting for an opportunity to find out what the passwords of the week were.

Now, we are not "in the clouds," ladies and gentlemen. We are walking on good terra firma. I have a couple of exhibits, I guess you might call them, that I would like to share with you about Mr. Achiever. This is his little handbook on communication which he offered to the youngsters over the air. Three thousand of them wrote for this little booklet. We were working on language, on speech, and this little booklet deals with talking, listening, writing and reading. I would like for you to know what is on one page. It's very short, but this is the take-off for the teacher. This is the page on "talking," and it is beamed at youngsters grades 4 through 8, and it goes something like this: "Talking. Think before you speak. Have something important to say when you talk. Speak clearly. Open your mouth. Put the ending on all of your words. Get your listener's attention before you begin to speak. If you say something incorrectly, stop and correct it. Tape your voice and listen to it. Read many kinds of books so you can talk about many things. Use the good language that you learn in school, at home and on the playground. Remember: Don't say, 'menz,' say 'men.' Don't say, 'he be,' say 'he is.' Don't say, 'they is,' say 'they are.' Dont say, 'dat, dey, git,' say 'that, they, get.'

Don't say, 'my mother she has,' say 'my mother has.' Don't say, 'I don't never,' say 'I don't' or 'I never.' " This is very elementary, but teachers can take off from this. Youngsters are interested in this, perhaps because it says the same thing that the teacher says but in a little different form.

We have many of what we call "honor assemblies," in which we go out of our way to pat youngsters on the back for perfect attendance, scholarship, special skills, for art, science and what-have-you. We have guidance assemblies, although we have no guidance personnel in the elementary schools in the City of St. Louis. We work up these programs and take them into the 23 schools—it may be a 40 or 45-minute program.

We are constantly saying: "If you want to be a success in the adult world of work, you better be a success in elementary school. If you want to be successful in the 8th grade, you better be successful in the 5th. If you want to be successful in high school, you better be in elementary school. That's the way you get a good-paying position as an adult, by being successful in school all the way through."

One of the ways we work with these youngsters over the air, as I said, is that Mr. Achiever has composition contests. I would like to share two of these entries with you to let you know we are getting through to our boys and girls. I've tried to give you a little of the background hurriedly in terms of what we are saying to the youngster as to why he needs to work hard every day, and that if he does, he will wind up with a good education and perhaps a good job.

Now, this is the entry from a fourth-grader, and when you hear it, I am certain you will know that it did not win a prize but it is indicative, we think, that we are getting through, and we might do something with this youngster by the time he leaves the 8th grade as long as he has this attitude. We give a half-dozen titles on which the youngsters might write. The titles are given out at eight o'clock in the morning. We pick up the compositions in the afternoon.

One of the titles was: "Why You Should Be Better Than You Are." The fourth-grader writes:

> "Why You Should Be Better Than You Are: I want to be better than I'm are because it don't mak since to be ignut and dum because I want a good education. I want to go all the way through school. I want a good decent job. That's why I'm going to be better than I'm are."

What I am describing here is the spirit we have developed in most of our pupils. By the time that boy becomes an eighth-grader you will not recognize him and his achievement. We can do something with him. If he has anything, it will come out.

In the same contest, "My Most Exciting Experience" was another title. I brought along this entry, by a sixth-grader, to let you know that some of the things you read about slum area children are not exactly true. These youngsters can express themselves. This entry was not a winner, but I think you will see from it that these youngsters can express themselves if given the opportunity.

> "One day I was walking downtown. A man drove up beside me in a big, black sedan. He asked me, did I know 'Big Al'? I told him, 'I don't know him.' Suddenly I thought, 'Big Al' was the toughest gangster of all. He stopped and I followed the car because it was driving slow. The car stopped in front of an old warehouse. I peeped in and saw cases of wine, beer, whiskey and other alcoholic beverages. Then I saw some criminals and their boys were coming in. There was 'Baby-Face' Nelson, Frank Valanchi, 'Pretty-Boy' Floyd and Al Capone. 'Big Al' said, 'Let's rob the Acme Fur Company.' I phoned the police. They came in and said, 'Hold up your hands.' Valanchi reached for his gun and shot two cops. Five of them grabbed tommy-guns; the rest grabbed pistols and rifles. They shot ten of them; the rest gave up. I went home, thinking of the exciting adventure."

You can see Mr. Achiever's hold on these boys and girls. He has a theme song. When you have an opportunity to hear "You Can Be Better Than You Are" by Bing Crosby, listen to the four verses, and see if you don't think it's written especially for boys and girls in school.

So much for our boys and girls. They certainly have responded to these efforts of our teachers. So have the parents, who have been wonderful. They come out in surprising numbers—300, 400, 500 people come out just to hear us talk about education and what it means to them and to their boys and girls. And we don't have any children on the program to draw the parents. Nor do we talk about bazaars and bake sales. We use these meetings for another purpose, and say that if they are not worth that purpose, then they are not worth having.

We ask our parents to do many things. I will tell you quickly that the most important thing we ask them to do is to serve as homework managers for their youngsters. We showed them how far behind their children were and why they needed to do homework, and asked

them to be the manager of the homework. We requested parents to do something they never had done before—to hold a conversation with their youngsters, to decide on what time every evening they would have the study hour. Also, we asked parents to be nervy enough to step up and turn off the television and the radio and permit no telephone conversations while this study hour was going on. These parents found out, for example, that their boys and girls were in the 7th grade, but were working at the 5th grade level. They had never understood this before. Parents asked how could they be helpful, so we came up with a ten-point Parents' Pledge of Cooperation. I will not have time to go into this.

I will say that our community has been behind us 100 percent. For one thing, all of the community agencies provided some type of study hall for use of the students in the evening. Another community effort was our "Operation Dine Out." We solicited funds in our community among the sororities and fraternities and some of the business establishments and raised about $3,000. This was to finance a "Dine Out" for 1100 seventh-graders, in groups of eight, in the finest restaurants in St. Louis.

Someone said, "What's this got to do with education?" Well, a lot of education took place, a lot of learning and actual, honest-to-goodness school work went into this "Operation Dine Out." There was quite a bit of preparation. We had a film called "A Date For Dinner." We showed this film to the parents, the youngsters and the teachers. In terms of the preparation, our teachers put together a 12-page mimeographed booklet on etiquette, conversation, manners, et cetera. After this experience there were evaluation reports that perhaps you would expect. The teachers said, "These boys and girls were wonderful. We were glad we could be their sponsors." And the children said: "You know, Miss Jones is a fine lady. I thought she was an old meany. I never saw her like this before." This was a social situation, and I guess that had a lot to do with it. I think we have to convince parents that we mean business, that we are sincerely interested in them and their children. The typical parents' comment was, "You mean they are taking my boy to dinner at the Statler?" The tone of voice in posing such a question indicated clearly that these parents were fully convinced of the school's sincere interest in their children.

And as for reading, Dr. Gross, when these youngsters were divided into the groups of eight, and the particular restaurant was deter-

mined where each youngster would go, we mimeographed the menu and handed it to these youngsters in a preparatory situation. The report from the teachers was, "These non-reading youngsters were reading those menus without any trouble." So, I think this is motivation at its best. And I am almost convinced that it is going to be through these kinds of activities that we reach youngsters in disadvantaged districts.

Do you think any of these youngsters, in the kinds of programs and situations I have been describing, displayed any of those feelings of belligerency and violence towards teachers and each other that so often develop in the deprived? Not at all, none. I am, therefore, looking for breakthroughs in the education of the deprived child by the development of the kind of unconventional curricula approach I have been describing.

QUESTIONS

(These are addressed to Mr. Keppel and Dr. Gross only, Dr. Shepard having had to leave the meeting before the question period.)

Q. What do you look for in seeking to recruit teachers who will be assigned to slum schools? Those especially academically able? Personal experiences with deprived children? Specific special training in the problems of educating deprived children?

Dr. Gross. That question is a little ambitious, especially for New York. We would settle, for a while at least, just for a lot more experienced teachers. One of our biggest difficulties is to persuade or convince teachers with experience to teach in what are euphemistically called the "difficult" schools in New York City. Let me be a little more expansive in answering this question. Until a year ago, there were annually in the fall, 400 so-called "uncovered" classrooms in New York City, actually 400 classrooms where no teacher showed up. The last two years this situation has been corrected, but it was especially severe in the "difficult" schools. You may be familiar with the Bedford-Stuyvesant area of New York City—it's in Brooklyn—and bears a lot of similarity to Harlem. In that district, which I suppose could be considered roughly comparable to Dr. Shepard's district in St. Louis, one year it was not until February that the final classroom got a teacher. In that district, the average experience of the teachers was less than two years. This is for a district of some

30,000 students. In one new school, the average experience was less than a year.

I know I am not answering your question specifically, but I am trying to give you a little indication of how far we have to go in staffing slum schools adequately. We are having a considerable measure of success in our More Effective Schools by providing the very finest professional conditions, the kind of situation where a teacher can feel he is not just making a professional sacrifice by going out there, not throwing his career away. He will have some substantial colleagues with whom to work, materials to work with, referral services, and so on.

This makes a great deal of difference, but it is very expensive. We can only do a little bit of it. To really solve the problem I think we are going to have to train up a whole new generation of teachers who understand what Dr. Shepard has so ably described.

In Pittsburgh, where I was superintendent, we used to say some of the kids had "slum shock." I think some middle-class teachers, when they take an assignment teaching in slum schools, get "slum shock" themselves. I have always felt that a thorough academic background and even academic brilliance is an asset in any teacher. In schools where there is a great deal of deprivation, I think that you should put more into it than academic background—you should put in faith, the absolute unwillingness to give up, based on the conviction that there is intellect to be brought out in the children. The teacher has to be smart enough, and has to have sufficient academic competence of his own, to guide the child upward from his morass, but whether this is something that should be set up as a primary criterion, I would not be prepared to say. I think this is perhaps about as far as I can go in answering that question at the moment.

Q. Do you advocate public education for all four-year-olds in the United States? Some states do not allow state funds to be used for kindergartens. Do you think it would be desirable that they do so?

Mr. Keppel. First, whether I think *all* four-year-olds should be required to go to kindergarten. I just don't know. But I do know, with a real sense of conscience, that the children whose homes do not provide the kind of atmosphere, the kind of stimulation which we think of as normal in an affluent society, most assuredly should have not only the chance, but the active encouragement of society to

go to kindergarten. I take it we are dealing here with about 20 percent of our schoolchildren.

Beyond this 20 percent, I suspect there are homes in the United States that have more stimulating environments than the schools themselves, homes where the mother and father give more stimulation than any social institution can provide. But this is not true with this 20 percent, or maybe more, of our children. So, although 20 or 25 percent should, I can't answer for the rest.

Second, should state laws be changed, where needed, to permit the expenditure of state funds for kindergartens? Yes.

Q. Does imbuing the children of the slums with middle-class values put them at odds with their parents?

Dr. Gross. I don't know the answer to that one. I am not sure this is what we are about to do, though, to imbue children with middle-class values, unless you are willing to say that diligence and aspiration are middle-class values. If they are, if this is what you mean, then I think this is what parents would like to see in their children. If you are talking about something entirely different, which you might perhaps call a middle-class way of looking at life, this is non-intellectual and not what we are looking for anyway. Let me say this: I don't think that doing the instructional job that has to be done for deprived children need in any sense put the children at odds with their parents.

Q. Mr. Keppel's definition of "deprived" does not fit my school in northern Virginia where some of the sorriest students come from affluent, comfortable, but neglectful homes. What is your remedy here?

Mr. Keppel. We know a lot of children of this sort whose families are well-to-do. I say bluntly that these are not the first concern on my mind as the U. S. Commissioner of Education. Those kids eat well, or if they don't eat well, it's their own fault. If they don't have a decent and human kind of relationship with their parents, it is to a degree their fault. Having said this, I say that I am more concerned with those of whom it can clearly be said that deprivation is not their fault, or even that of their parents.

Of course I have a great deal of sympathy for some of these students from affluent homes. These adolescents are under great pressure for success, measured in middle-class values, the values which the upper class looks down on and the lower class looks down on, too. These

children have a sense of pressure—are they going to get into college as their fathers and mothers did? This pressure now is greater on them than it was in their fathers' and mothers' generation. Some of these youngsters are breaking and bending under the pressure and we ought to show Christian compassion and human sympathy for them. But while they are having a tough time they aren't anywhere as badly off as the others, the deprived 20 percent.

Q. Granted that reading is the most important skill for social acceptability, why is it the most important subject to start children on disciplined intellectual activities?

Dr. Gross. I think we have discovered that children can read earlier than we used to think they could. I don't know why we should begin with reading if there is some other discipline that might be taught earlier as a formalized discipline. I am not looking at reading as an ornament or as something which enhances social acceptability, but as a basic tool which unlocks the doors to all the other subjects. That's why I think it has to come first.

Q. How would you characterize the ingredients of a good pre-kindergarten instructional program? And, second, what is your attitude toward Montessori schools as a preparation for public schools?

Dr. Gross. I took the pains to say, during my earlier remarks, that I don't know what we ought to be doing in pre-kindergarten instruction, and that ought to get me off the hook. I have to answer generally. But I frankly don't know a great deal about teaching very young children. The job we have to do, in effect, is to "intervene," in Deutsch's word, in the environment of the child, to provide, in so far as we can, intellectual or educational experiences, so that he arrives, deprived though he may have been, or would have been, ready to do the work of the first grade and second grade and third grade, and can begin to swim on his own. He arrives at the first and second and third grades having had a chance to see what the world looks like, and has had the kind of experiences that are typical for the middle-class child, so that he is not impaired in his ability to learn, so that he has prior learning in his background, and has habits that are conducive to learning, too. Exactly how you do this I don't really know.

As far as Montessori is concerned, I think there is a great deal of good in what Montessori has done. I have one word of caution: Let's not be doctrinaire about a completely slavish reapplication of Montessori. There is possibly something viable there that's over-

looked; if so, let's resurrect it, but let's adapt it too, and be free in the way it is used.

Q. Are such measures as inter-school visits, integrated cultural and social activities, etc., enough to overcome the effects of *de facto* segregation? Or do children have to be physically, culturally and economically integrated through busing, redistricting or building new schools in fringe areas?

Mr. Keppel. The question, of course, asks us to compare the world on earth and the world in heaven, and I prefer heaven. The problem is how do you get there, how do you get there under existing circumstances, and how do you get there given the physical and other problems that are presented? Obviously, whitewash won't cover problems in this real world, at least not for long. You have to take positive measures with all the wisdom you have.

Dr. Gross. I have to answer this very simply: I would say that I am firmly convinced that the former alternative is not sufficient, and that until matters have, shall we say, righted themselves socially, so that schools, particularly neighborhood schools, can operate in what I consider to be a normal, integrated context, schools have an obligation to do whatever of the latter alternative is consistent with sound and feasible education practice.

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